

Copyright 1998 National Broadcasting Co. Inc.
NBC News Transcripts

SHOW: DATELINE NBC (10:00 PM ET)

October 27, 1998, Tuesday 9:03 AM

LENGTH: 8842 words

HEADLINE: DEVIL'S ADVOCATE; A WOMAN WAS CONVINCED SHE WAS INVOLVED WITH SATANISM AS A RESULT OF A DOCTOR'S USE OF DRUGS AND HYPNOSIS AS THERAPY

REPORTERS: KATIE COURIC

BODY:
DEVIL'S ADVOCATE?

Announcer: From studio 3B in Rockefeller Center, here is Jane Pauley.

JANE PAULEY: Good evening. Is it possible to be a murderer and not know it? To commit a serious of unspeakable crimes and not remember them? The woman you'll meet tonight was a mild-mannered mother suffering from depression, or was it something much worse than that? Something much more sinister? Was she involved somehow with the devil himself? How she escaped and who it was she ultimately had to escape from is our story. As Victoria Corderi tells us, it all started with the birth of a boy.

Ms. PAT **BURGUS:** (Voiceover) His birth was very difficult. He was almost 11 pounds. Each contraction had strangled him.

(Segment graphic; Operating room; medical equipment)

VICTORIA CORDERI reporting: (Voiceover) A traumatic birth exacts a terrible toll on child and mother.

(Medical instruments and equipment; infants hands and feet)

Ms. **BURGUS:** He was paralyzed from them trying to break his shoulders to get him out. His right arm was paralyzed. I would try to go to sleep, I would wake up screaming.

CORDERI: You were blaming yourself?

Ms. **BURGUS:** Why couldn't I protect this child?

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Eventually, it would send her into a terrible depression.

(Pat **Burgus**)

Ms. **BURGUS:** The trauma of the delivery, the--the guilt...

(Voiceover) ...it just haunted me, day and night.

(Pat)

CORDERI: This is the story of Pat **Burgus**, a woman who sought help for her depression, as

so many others do when they're in psychological pain. Over the next decade, Pat **Burgus** would take a medical journey that would force her to confront such horrors as satanic cults, murder, and even cannibalism. Her treatment raises profound questions about what medical authorities are allowed to get away with, especially those in a profession so many turn to when there's nowhere else to go.

Ms. **BURGUS**: Up until Mikey's birth, I--I felt I was living a fairy tale.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Before the birth of second son, Pat **Burgus** would have described herself as a happily married working mom. She had never had a major psychiatric problem. She was a deeply devout Catholic from Des Moines, Iowa, who named her first born after Pope John Paul.

(Pat holding John **Burgus**; photo of Pat with Mike and John **Burgus**; photo of Pat; Catholic church building; photo of Pope John Paul)

Ms. **BURGUS**: My faith has always been a very close part of my whole thinking process and--and my whole being.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) But her faith could not pull her from the deepening postpartum depression. For that, she sought out a professional--Ann Marie Baughman, a Des Moines therapist. Pat told Baughman she feared getting pregnant again. She even developed a psychosomatic pregnancy, believing she was carrying a baby, even though was not.

(Photo of Pat and Mike; Ann Marie Baughman; Baughman's office door; photo of Pat and family; photo of Pat)

Ms. **BURGUS**: I referred to myself as "we," because I had always done that when I was pregnant with both of the kids. She caught on to that, and she said, "You know, I don't think that it's the fact that you're--you think you're pregnant."

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Instead, the therapist thought it was a sign that Pat fit the profile of a hot new psychiatric diagnosis.

(Photo of Pat)

Ms. **BURGUS**: She brought up multiple personality disorder, and she asked my husband and I what we knew about it. And, you know, we knew about the movie "Sybil."

(Clip from "Sybil" shown)

CORDERI: (Voiceover) "Sybil," a best selling book and television movie from 1970s is the way most of America learned about multiple personality disorder. In Sybil's story, as with most all multiples, the trauma that seemed to fragment her mind was severe child abuse. But Pat appeared to be the rare exception. It seemed the event that sent her over the edge was her son's birth. Though the diagnosis was unusual, it made sense at the time to Pat's husband, Mike.

(Clips from "Sybil"; photo of Pat and son; operating room)

Mr. MIKE **BURGUS**: I was there. I, you know, I knew how bad it was.

CORDERI: But you had never seen the personalities before.

Mr. **BURGUS**: Never.

CORDERI: Never.

Mr. **BURGUS**: But I'd never seen, you know, Patty act the way she was acting after Mikey's birth, either.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Pat says Baughman had her define her moods. Then, Pat says, she would hypnotize her and address those moods as separate personalities. They are recorded in her medical records with names like "Evil One," "Religious One "Just Fine," and more than 30 others.

(Pat looking out window; medical records with names circled)

Ms. **BURGUS**: She would tell me that the "Depressed One" wants to talk to me. And we would role-play this out. But it got to the point where it wasn't role-playing anymore. Then that--that happened so much, it was just like it was out of control.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Pat's despair only worsened. She attempted suicide and became too despondent to work.

(Photo of Pat)

Ms. **BURGUS**: Just this horrible, terrible dark sadness came over me.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Pat says the therapist told her she needed more intense help.

(Baughman)

Ms. **BURGUS**: Now that I had gotten this ill, that I would need to go...(station difficulties).

CORDERI: (Voiceover) She finally called the National Institute of Mental Health and was given the name of a renowned pioneer in the field of multiple personal disorder, Dr. Bennett Braun.

(National Institute of Mental Health building; People magazine article about Dr. Bennett Braun)

Dr. BENNETT BRAUN: When I first started doing this work, I was, incredulous to say the least, and a disbeliever, to say the least.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) In the mid '80s, Dr. Bennett Braun was at the epicenter of the field of multiple personality disorder. He appeared in videos on the subject, wrote a book, and testified widely as an expert on multiples. Good Housekeeping magazine eventually included him on its list of top psychiatrists in America. And even Gloria Steinem would laud him for his work. And by the time Pat was seeking help, Dr. Braun had become the head of a revolutionary new program devoted to the treatment of multiples. Housed inside of one of Chicago's most respected hospitals, Rush Presbyterian St. Luke's Medical Center.

(Dr. Braun; cover of Dr. Braun's book; Braun testifying in court; Good Housekeeping article; list of top psychiatrists; Dr. Braun with Gloria Steinem; photo of Dr. Braun; Rush Presbyterian St. Luke's Medical Center exterior)

CORDERI: So Pat and Mike made the trip from Des Moines to Chicago. They worried it was a long shot that such an esteemed doctor would take Pat's case. But the program seemed tailor-made for her, and for the first time in two years, Pat and Mike **Burgus** felt there

might be hope.

Did you feel like you were looking finally at your savior, or your salvation? Someone who was going to make you better?

Ms. **BURGUS**: Yes. This seemed to be an answer that we'd been praying for.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) But be careful what pray for. Dr. Braun would indeed take on Pat's case, and take her for a wild, six year, psychological ride that eventually would ensnare her husband and two small children, as well.

(Photo of Dr. Braun; photo of Pat and Mike; photo of **Burgus**' sons)

PAULEY: In search of the devil, when we return.

(Announcements)

Announcer: From studio 3B in New York, here is Stone Phillips.

STONE PHILLIPS: Returning to our story, a woman suffering from depression has been diagnosed with something far more serious--multiple personality disorder. Now a doctor, known as one of the country's leading experts, has accepted her for treatment. As it begins, he appears to make a frightening discovery--that all those personalities may be hiding a mass murderer or worse. Here again is Victoria Corderi.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) In March of 1986, Pat **Burgus** checked in to Dr. Bennett Braun's pioneering clinic at Rush Presbyterian St. Luke's Medical Center in Chicago.

(Exterior of Rush Presbyterian hospital)

Dr. BRAUN: She was extremely agitated. There were times she couldn't sit still.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Dr. Braun spoke about Pat's case a few years ago in this video. He said the woman he met was completely out of control.

(Dr. Braun testifying in court; photo of Pat)

Dr. BRAUN: Pacing, wringing her hands, talking to crying. She had changes in voice quality, changes in behavior, changes in style of speaking.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Symptoms of multiple personality disorder. The challenge now was to get to its roots. Mike says Dr. Braun told them that 99 percent of all multiples are victims of sexual abuse.

(Photos of Pat; Pat and Mike)

Mr. **BURGUS**: And Patty had said, "Well, you know, I'm that one percent then, because I, you know, I haven't been sexually abused."

CORDERI: (Voiceover) But Dr. Braun suspected otherwise. He mapped out an intense course of treatment for Pat--frequent hypnosis combined with of a variety of medications, all of them powerful drugs to calm her down, including anti-anxiety drugs, painkillers, antidepressants, and a controversial sleeping pill that can cause hallucinations, paranoia, and depression, and megadoses of one other drug--Lidocaine--a heart medicine which Dr. Braun hoped would help Pat to think more coherently.

(Dr. Braun; photo of Dr. Braun; photo of Pat; drug bottles)

CORDERI: And suddenly, new visions did begin to appear in Pat's mind--frightening images that would turn inside out everything she believed about herself, her family, and her life. Because, for the first time, this 29-year-old woman who had never had a single recollection of any child abuse began to discover something new.

Dr. BRAUN: She reported to me that she had severe neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) So, Pat fit into Dr. Braun's profile of a multiple after all. With his help, she recovered memories of abuse at the hands of people she loved and thought had protected her her entire life--her parents. And there was more, something beyond imagination--Pat **Burgus**, a devout Catholic who'd named one of her sons after the pope, seemed to discover that she was actually part of a secret satanic cult that engaged in unbelievable rituals. Pat says it all came to a head one day, about a month after her admission to Rush, when Dr. Braun came to visit her.

(Photo of Pat; photo of Pat's family; photo of Pat's parents; pentagram necklace; photo of Pope John Paul; Pope John Paul in processional; painting of satanic ceremony; torch; Rush hospital exterior)

Ms. **BURGUS**: And said he had a very important question to ask me--a very serious question. He said, "Have you ever eaten people?" And it was just out of the blue, like, he was standing in my doorway. And I said, "yes." And--and he hit the--the side of the door. And, it was just like 'Bingo! There it is!' And I'm sitting there, in my bed, in my nightgown, thinking "What just happened? Why did I just do that?"

CORDERI: Why did you?

Ms. **BURGUS**: I--I--I don't know.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Was it because as unthinkable as it seemed, it was true? Pat says Dr. Braun told her she had to find out. He began to take her further and deeper into the possibility in her hypnosis.

(Pentagram necklace; Dr. Braun; Pat)

Ms. **BURGUS**: I was to be imagining myself at a satanic cult ceremony--picture myself being this high priestess in charge of this entire event.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Then, while hypnotized, Pat would recover brutal memories of senseless events--events she'd never consciously recalled before entering treatment. But it made sense to her doctors, Pat says--a perfect explanation for her lapse into multiple personality disorder.

(Pat; satanic symbols; Rush hospital exterior; Pat)

Ms. **BURGUS**: They would say, "Well, what you were telling us was so terrible that the other personalities, for your own protection, blocked you out."

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Through the next weeks and months, Pat's medical records show she confessed to a laundry list of depravities--hundreds of accounts of murders, orgies, rapes and cannibalism. All of this, discovered through hours of hypnosis and heavy doses of

drugs.

(Medical records; painting of satanic ceremony; knife; candle; gun; human skull; photo of Pat)

Ms. **BURGUS**: I had come to believe that I was killing children, eating people. I was raped and abused.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Even worse, she'd come to believe that she'd forced her two young sons, ages three and five, to participate in these barbaric rituals as well, and that she had sexually abused them, just as she had been sexually abused. Pat says Dr. Braun told her only she could help them.

(Photo of Pat's sons; Pat)

Ms. **BURGUS**: He told me that I had to get all of these secrets out of me first, and then we had to go and get these secrets out of the kids. Otherwise, none of us would get better.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) So Pat and Mike, placing so much faith in this renowned doctor at this prestigious hospital, made a wrenching decision. They put John, just five years old and not even in kindergarten, in the hospital.

(Photo of Pat and Mike; Dr. Braun; Photo of Pat and John)

Mr. **BURGUS**: I saw how miserable Patty was. And I didn't want that to happen to my son. Excuse me. And so that's why John went into the hospital for an evaluation.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) And on the advice of Dr. Braun, Pat says Mikey, a tiny boy of three, soon followed.

(Photo of Pat and Mikey **Burgus**)

Mr. **BURGUS**: I couldn't take the chance of losing him, too. So that's why we put him in the hospital.

CORDERI: You thought you were saving your family.

Mr. **BURGUS**: Yes, I did.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) The three- and five-year-old were separated from their mother and put inside the locked unit of Rush's Department of Child Psychiatry. They were given their own regimen of drugs and therapy. And now, when Pat would recover a memory that involved the boys, she says Dr. Braun would then take her to see sons and hold a joint therapy session to help them remember what she now believed they were repressing--memories of rapes and murders and cannibalism.

(Photos of John and Mikey; Rush Children's hospital exterior; pills; Pat; photo of Pat with sons; photos of John and Mikey)

Ms. **BURGUS**: We had to go over this and over this until they could talk about doing it themselves.

CORDERI: That they had...

Ms. **BURGUS**: That they had killed this baby. Mikey had to talk about what it was like to

eat the baby, what it was like to have to bite the baby when it was still alive and eat its--eat its cheek.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Pat says Dr. Braun even used guns and handcuffs in his therapy with her boys, again, to try to draw out their memories.

(Gun; handcuffs; photo of John and Mikey)

Ms. **BURGUS**: And the kids were supposed to look at that door, holding these guns, aiming these guns at the door, and to imagine the kids that they were killing.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) One of John's images was so vivid, Dr. Braun later used it when he testified as an expert on multiple personality disorder.

(Knife being stuck into table)

Dr. BRAUN: I had one child who was just five years old talk to about what it's like to stick a knife in somebody's abdomen, and pull down, and how the intestines pop out--I mean, they just blow up, and what it smells like. Having done surgery myself, I know what it's like to open a belly, and if the anesthesia isn't done right, and the muscle relaxant isn't done right, that's exactly what happens. The bowels come right out through the wound. And this--here's a five-year-old who can describe to me something I know something about. Where does a five-year-old learn about this?

CORDERI: (Voiceover) These stories seemed so real that Dr. Braun even sent Mike on an unbelievable mission.

(Photo of **Burgus** family)

Mr. **BURGUS**: He had my husband go to a family barbecue and bring back a hamburger. He said he had it tested at the hospital for human tissue.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Yes, you heard right. Dr. Braun asked for meat from Pat's family barbecue. He was using the laboratory of a major, respected medical center to test meat to see if it contained human flesh. So what was going on here? Was Dr. Braun simply playing along with Pat's psychotic hallucinations as part of her therapy? Or was something else happening, more evil and damaging than she could ever have known?

(Hamburgers being cooked on grill; Rush hospital exterior; test tube; Dr. Braun; Pat; Dr. Braun with Pat)

PHILLIPS: Some troubling questions about Dr. Braun and his techniques when we return.

(Announcements)

PAULEY: Returning to our story--shortly after being admitted to a special psychiatric program, Pat **Burgus** and her doctor seemed to have made a startling discovery, that beneath her hundreds of false personalities, Pat once led a life as the leader of a murderous satanic cult. But if this mild-mannered mother isn't all she at first appeared to be, it turns out, neither is her doctor. Here again is Victoria Corderi.

Ms. **BURGUS**: He was just like this master detective, piecing all this--this puzzle together.

CORDERI: The puzzle of a worldwide cult.

Ms. **BURGUS**: A worldwide, intergenerational, satanic cult, that had avoided all detection until him.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Was Dr. Bennett Braun really a master detective? Pat **Burgus** certainly appeared to be a very sick woman. She's almost unrecognizable here, under the influence of heavy drugs and hypnosis in this local Chicago news series.

(1988 news series clip)

Dr. BENNETT BRAUN: (From 1988 news series) Who's there?

Ms. **BURGUS**: (From 1988 news series) Sarah.

Dr. BRAUN: (From 1988 news series) How old are you, Sarah?

Ms. **BURGUS**: (From 1988 news series) I'm five.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Dr. Braun hypnotized Pat so she could assume several of her personalities for a story about his clinic.

(1988 news series clip)

Ms. **BURGUS**: (From 1988 news series) Well, I'm Pete.

Dr. BRAUN: (From 1988 news series) You're Pete. How old are you, Pete?

Ms. **BURGUS**: (From 1988 news series) Thirteen.

CORDERI: How many personalities did you have?

Ms. **BURGUS**: Oh, we gave up after 300--I mean, we were over 300.

Ms. **BURGUS**: (From 1988 news series) I don't like this kind of crap.

CORDERI: Pat's personalities are startling and convincing, but was Dr. Braun uncovering them or just creating memories and planting them in Pat's mind?

(Voiceover) Pat never realized that while she was submitting to Dr. Braun's treatment, the American Medical Association had issued a report criticizing hypnosis and warning that it had the power to create false memories.

(1988 news series clip; documents)

CORDERI: And she also didn't know that the credentials of this so-called expert were not what they seemed.

Dr. BRAUN: All my life, one of the things I wanted to be was a psychiatrist.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Maybe so, but Dr. Braun had a tough time completing his residency. He was asked to leave the University of Chicago hospital after unspecified disagreements with the administration. He spent more than a decade practicing psychiatry before finally completing his training at Rush. Even after Pat came into his care, he repeatedly failed to get board certified as a psychiatrist.

(Braun; University of Chicago Hospital; photo of Braun; Rush hospital; Braun in car)

Unidentified Man #1: (Videotaped deposition) So, it wasn't until the third or fourth time...

Dr. BRAUN: (Videotaped deposition) That's right.

Man #1: (Videotaped deposition) ...and you're not sure which, that you actually passed the board?

Dr. BRAUN: (Videotaped deposition) That's correct.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) So, Pat and her sons were being treated by an uncertified psychiatrist using an unproven form of therapy--administering huge doses of mind-altering drugs. And it wasn't just Pat, but several other patients on the unit who were all discovering disturbing memories, strikingly similar to beliefs Dr. Braun held before he met Pat. It's an upside-down world of cult ritual abuse. Listen to how he would describe it in a lecture he gave to mental health professionals in 1992.

(Photo of Pat and children; medication bottles; hospital; cult photos; photo of Braun; fire)

Dr. BRAUN: (1992 audiotape) I've developed 12 "P's" for your people in ritual abuse: pimps, pushers, prostitutes, physicians, psychiatrists, psychotherapists, principals and teachers, public workers, police, politicians and judges, priests and clergy of all religions.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) And not just priests, but the highest reaches of the Catholic church. About a year into Pat's treatment, she says, Dr. Braun found these pictures of her trip to Rome to see the pope. Pat says he saw much more than the Holy Father blessing her child.

(Vatican; Pope walking; photos of Pope with child)

Ms. **BURGUS:** He said that that was positive proof that the Holy Father had sexually abused my son, because I was handing him right into the hands of an abuser. In reality, he was the leader of a satanic cult.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) The Holy Father an abuser and satanic cult leader? Why did Pat and the other patients on the unit believe these outrageous things? Perhaps because they were hypnotized, drugged and isolated.

(Pope; photo of Pope; pills)

Ms. **BURGUS:** It was such an incredibly, total paranoid environment. No one outside of him and his handpicked staff, were safe to trust.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) In Dr. Braun's unit, most everything brought in for the patients took on a secret meaning, even flowers. They were supposedly used to send satanic messages.

(Flowers)

Dr. BRAUN: (Voiceover) Red roses in white baby's breath, it means a bloody suicide as opposed to, let's say, pink roses or pink carnations in white baby's breath, which means hanging, often.

(Flowers)

CORDERI: (Voiceover) In fact, Dr. Braun twice intercepted bouquets of flowers Pat's parents sent her.

(Flowers)

Ms. **BURGUS**: (Voiceover) I was told that my parents were sending me satanic cult cues.

(Photo of parents)

Ms. **BURGUS**: And that I was to--to kill myself after I received these.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Kill herself, Pat says Dr. Braun told her, so she wouldn't expose the dealings of the cult, and Pat says he told her it was time to take certain drastic measures that would heal her and would help put a stop to the satanic cult. She says he told her to confront her parents, whom she now believed were cult members who had repeatedly sexually abused her and her sons. Her parents came to Chicago.

(Flowers; drawings; Pat; family photos; hospital and train)

CORDERI: Do you remember what she said?

Unidentified Woman #1: No, I don't really remember. I do know that Chuck said, 'Are you saying that your mother and I have abused you?' And she said, 'Sexually and criminally.' Well, we were just floored, naturally.

CORDERI: And what did you do?

Woman #1: Done a lot of crying.

CORDERI: But didn't you want to do something if you really believed that your parents had, indeed, abused you, abused your own children?

Ms. **BURGUS**: I--I turned them into the FBI.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Pat says Dr. Braun called the FBI to meet with her in the hospital. Nothing resulted from the meetings. And how did Dr. Braun explain the FBI's failure to act? Pat says he told her the FBI had now joined the conspiracy.

(FBI building; photo of Braun; FBI building)

CORDERI: By now, you might be thinking this story is too strange to be taken seriously. How could Pat **Burgus** believe she had done these things? And how could Dr. Braun buy into this preposterous sounding conspiracy? It seems outlandish, but remember, Pat and her children were inside one of Chicago's most reputable hospitals with someone they thought was one of the country's top psychiatrists.

(Voiceover) Pat **Burgus**, who initially was supposed to have spent three months at Rush, was there for 27 months, more than two years. And when she finally would get out, she found she was still, in many ways, a captive.

(Pat; hospital; Pat)

PAULEY: Pat discovers the painful truth about herself and perhaps Dr. Braun when we return.

(Announcements)

PHILLIPS: Returning to our story--Pat **Burgus**, who has come to believe she was the leader of a satanic cult, is about to make some startling discoveries about herself and about her doctor, and in some ways the reality is far more frightening than the fantasy she has just escaped. Here again Victoria Corderi.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) In 1988, two years after Pat **Burgus** first entered Rush Presbyterian Hospital, Dr. Braun felt she finally could be trusted on the outside. Though her young children had to remain in the hospital, Pat was allowed to leave and continue treatment as an outpatient.

(Rush hospital; Pat; photo of boys; Pat)

Ms. **BURGUS**: It was the best thing that could have ever happened to me.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) What happened was a slow unraveling of what Pat had been led to believe while she was in the hospital. She and her husband began to search for evidence of her family's involvement in the cult.

(Pat; Pat and Mike on bench)

Ms. **BURGUS**: We made numerous trips back to Iowa.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) To Des Moines, the supposed scene of most of her crimes.

(Des Moines)

Ms. **BURGUS**: Looking for evidence, going to places where there were supposed to be bodies. The...

CORDERI: Evidence that a ceremony had taken place?

Ms. **BURGUS**: Yeah.

CORDERI: Like--like what?

Ms. **BURGUS**: If I had stumbled across an old bonfire, that probably would have done it, you know? I was looking for anything.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) And she found nothing. So for the first time there were seeds of doubt in Pat's mind. If she'd committed hundreds of murders, why was there not one shred of proof?

(Pat in trees; skeleton)

Ms. **BURGUS**: 'What if this isn't real?'

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Pat then began to wonder about the effects of the many drugs Dr. Braun was giving her, especially the high experimental doses of the heart medication Inderal. She was stunned to learn that her dosage, which on many days could be 1200 milligrams, was four times the normal dose. Pat decided to quit cold turkey.

(Medication bottles; pills)

Ms. **BURGUS**: He had literally made me addicted to the Xanax, the Halcion, and the--the chest pains itself was just so horrible coming off the Inderal.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) And once Pat cleared the drugs from her body, she found her mind becoming clearer as well, and more questions arose.

(Pills; Pat)

Ms. **BURGUS**: I said, 'I think these were just hallucinations.'

CORDERI: So you were starting to rebel?

Ms. **BURGUS**: If thinking in this therapy is rebelling, then that's what I was starting to do.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) And Pat started to believe Dr. Braun was using her devout faith against her whenever she questioned her memories.

(Church; cross)

Ms. **BURGUS**: If I believed in God and I had no proof of his existence, and nothing tangible that I could touch, then I had to believe that this was real, even though I couldn't see it or touch it or have any evidence of it.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) And now out of the hospital and free of drugs, Pat began to rethink everything that had happened to her during her treatment with Dr. Braun. Remember the court testimony in which Dr. Braun offered proof that Pat's son John had helped to disembowel a human being?

(Pat; Rush hospital; photo of Braun; tape of Braun)

Dr. BRAUN: (Videotaped deposition) I had one child who was just five years old talk to me about what it's like to stick a knife in somebody's abdomen and pull it down, and having intestines pop out. I mean, they just blow out, and what it smells like.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Pat realized the story sounded too familiar. Certainly, a memory, but not quite what Dr. Braun had in mind.

(Clip of "Empire Strikes Back")

Ms. **BURGUS**: I told him that that was a scene out of "Star Wars."

CORDERI: (Voiceover) So now, as Pat regained her mind, she and Mike became determined to regain their children, who by now had been in the hospital for nearly three years. They ultimately had to go to court to get John and Mikey released from Rush. Experts say theirs are two of the longest stays for such young children in a psychiatric unit.

(Clip of "The Empire Strikes Back"; Pat and Mike; photos of boys; Rush Children's Hospital)

Ms. **BURGUS**: We had our freedom, but we still didn't have our minds back.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) By the early '90s, Pat and Mike had finally come to believe that everything--Pat's treatment, the kids' treatment, the entire three-year-long hospitalization under the care of Dr. Bennett Braun--had been a sham. They filed suit against both hospital and doctor for allowing this bizarre therapy to take place and, they say, nearly destroy their family.

(Medallion; photo of Pope; photo of boys; Rush hospital; photo of Braun; document; family

photo)

Ms. **BURGUS**: Every thing about our memories, everything about our real lives, was contaminated.

Dr. RICHARD OFSHE: Pat is typical of innumerable people who wind up being the targets of this therapy.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Dr. Richard Ofshe is a noted critic of the diagnosis of multiple personality disorder. He was a paid expert who worked on Pat's case.

(Ofshe)

CORDERI: How did something like this happen?

Dr. OFSHE: It's happening all over the country, in major cities all over the country.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Dr. Ofshe says a true diagnosis of multiple personality disorder is exceedingly rare, yet it became accepted and even fashionable in the mid '80s, but it's always been controversial. It certainly was in Pat's case. This letter to Dr. Braun's associate from Pat's former therapist in Des Moines says six other doctors disputed Pat's diagnosis. Ofshe says Dr. Braun was one of many therapists who bought into the diagnosis and applied it to vulnerable, depressed patients who believed in them.

(Ofshe writing; news article; letter; tape of Braun and Pat)

Dr. OFSHE: You can get somebody to believe just about anything you want them to believe about themselves and their histories arising from this.

CORDERI: You mean, because of the power of the therapist?

Dr. OFSHE: The influence power of the therapist.

CORDERI: The influence power.

Dr. OFSHE: Pat was also subjected to a drug regimen, which, if anything, was going to make her decision-making deteriorate.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) And then, Ofshe says, another factor fueled the explosion of the multiple personality disorder diagnosis--insurance paid for the treatments.

(Document)

Dr. OFSHE: They were, in many ways, simply ways to vacuum down to nothing people's insurance policies.

CORDERI: You're making it sound like it's a huge financial scam.

Dr. OFSHE: No, that's not what I'm saying. Sometimes when you get paid a lot for doing something, it looks more attractive. One of the things that would contribute to the popularization of any new diagnosis is whether or not you can get paid for treating it.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) And in the case of the **Burgus** family, their insurance paid out almost \$ 3 million to Dr. Braun and Rush Presbyterian-St. Luke's Medical Center. Each patient had a million-dollar cap on their policies, and in each case that limit was nearly

reached.

(Photo of family; photo of Braun; Rush hospital; photo of Pat; photo of boy; photo of boy; document)

CORDERI: But was it money that propelled this nightmarish treatment? Or was it just misguided, bad medicine? Whatever it was, Pat was not alone in her ordeal. DATELINE has discovered a total of 11 lawsuits against Dr. Bennett Braun, all alleging that he planted false memories of satanic abuse in various patients in the dissociative disorders unit.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) The allegations are eerily similar. One patient says she was told she was "a participant in satanic cult activity." Another says her mother was named as the leader of a "five-state regional cult." And still another claims she was heavily medicated then led to believe she "drank blood and ate human sacrifices." So as what appears to be a house of cards begins to fall, what of the man and the hospital at the center of the fire storm?

(Documents)

Man #1: (Videotaped deposition) Do you think now, looking back, that you got carried away with this, and you spent much time focusing on these so-called "memories" of all this satanic cult stuff?

Unidentified Man #2: (Videotaped deposition) Objection.

PHILLIPS: We'll hear Dr. Braun's side of the story when we come back.

(Announcements)

PAULEY: Returning to our story--Pat **Burgus** has now escaped the fantasy world where she was convinced she was a leader of a satanic cult. Firmly grounded in reality, she's now come to believe she was misdiagnosed and mistreated by her doctors. Her doctors say they didn't cause her problem; they cured it.

Ms. **BURGUS**: I want to know why no one stopped this. Why was it allowed to go on?

CORDERI: (Voiceover) So why was it allowed to go on? Who was watching what was happening at one of Chicago's premier hospitals? Not just to Pat, but to so many other patients.

(Rush Children's Hospital; photo of Pat)

CORDERI: We wanted to talk with Dr. Braun, who agreed to an interview, only if Pat **Burgus** signed a release allowing him to discuss her case. She did sign a release, but then Dr. Braun still declined an interview because of all of the other lawsuits pending against him.

(Voiceover) But he did give his side in this videotaped deposition in the lawsuit of Pat **Burgus** and her family.

(Braun in videotaped deposition)

Dr. BRAUN: (Videotaped deposition) I have to work with the patient with what they are telling me. My opinion is that she gave me sufficient data to accept that there was a possibility of this being true.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Dr. Braun repeatedly insists that he was only reacting to the stories Pat was telling him, and that he was duty-bound as her psychiatrist to investigate them.

(Braun's deposition; pages of handwritten stories; photo of Pat; Braun in deposition)

Man #1: (Videotaped deposition) And you believe those statements to be plausible. Isn't that right?

Dr. BRAUN: (Videotaped deposition) Plausible, yes.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) During the 10-day deposition, Dr. Braun often chuckles, smirks, shrugs, or is generally dismissive of the question. He reviews some of his entries from past medical records.

(Braun laughing during deposition)

Man #1: (Videotaped deposition) Is there a sentence there that reads, "This memory came back Saturday and caused her to vomit"?

Dr. BRAUN: (Videotaped deposition) That is correct.

Man #1: (Videotaped deposition) Does that say "memory" there, Dr. Braun?

Dr. BRAUN: (Videotaped deposition) That's the word.

Man #1: (Videotaped deposition) Does it say "fantasy"?

Dr. BRAUN: (Videotaped deposition) No, sir.

Man #1: (Videotaped deposition) Does it say "nightmare"?

Dr. BRAUN: (Videotaped deposition) I'll probably say no to the rest of the things you're listing.

Man #1: (Videotaped deposition) Does it say "belief"?

Dr. BRAUN: (Videotaped deposition) No.

Man #1: (Videotaped deposition) Does it say "delusion"?

Dr. BRAUN: (Videotaped deposition) No.

Man #1: (Videotaped deposition) Does it say "alleged memory"?

Dr. BRAUN: (Videotaped deposition) No.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) And what about the hospital where Dr. Braun worked? Was anyone at Rush Presbyterian overseeing Dr. Braun's practices? His hypnosis? His drug therapy? His unorthodox care?

(Rush Presbyterian hospital; Braun in office; Braun punching wall with boxing gloves on)

Dr. JAN FAWCETT: I knew, of course, that it was highly controversial. I knew that there were no standards for treatment for it.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Dr. Jan Fawcett is the head of psychiatry at Rush Presbyterian. He allowed Dr. Braun to start his program, and was supposed to oversee it.

(Corderi in interview with Jan Fawcett; footage of Pat **Burgus**)

CORDERI: Was there anything written about what was planned for this unit? Exactly what kinds of therapies, what kind of medications were being used?

Dr. FAWCETT: No, no, there were no specific plans. And--and in most cases, those aren't necessary.

CORDERI: Why not?

Dr. FAWCETT: Well, why would you need that if you trust the person who's doing it?

CORDERI: (Voiceover) But what about the letter from Pat's Des Moines therapist that said six psychiatrists disputed Pat's diagnosis of multiple personality disorder?

(Letter from therapist; text excerpts from letter)

TEXT: disagreed and argued with the multiple personality disorder diagnosis

CORDERI: This letter suggests to me that red flags should have been flying, that there was so much disagreement over her diagnosis.

Dr. FAWCETT: That also means that she had consulted six different psychiatrists in three different hospitals and was not well, doesn't it?

CORDERI: (Voiceover) So Rush Presbyterian accepted the diagnosis, but had no written plans about how the unit would run, under what guidelines, and no specific rules governing the use of hypnosis.

(Rush Presbyterian Hospital; photo of Pat)

CORDERI: The AMA has said--made it clear in 1985--that hypnosis is likely to produce false memories, and needed to be used judiciously.

Dr. FAWCETT: Well, my understanding is that the false memories were there when they--when she came in.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Dr. Braun does admit in his deposition that he was the first person Pat talked to about her satanic memories.

(Braun in deposition; photo of Pat; pentagram)

Man #1: (Videotaped deposition) You were the first one that she talked to about satanic cults, is that correct?

Dr. BRAUN: (Videotaped deposition) That's correct.

Dr. FAWCETT: I think the real question is, is that, is that her fantasy? Or is that reality? And I encouraged him to explore that.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) But Dr. Braun believed in a cult conspiracy before he ever met Pat

Burgus.

(Braun in deposition)

CORDERI: There are writings to that effect, about the satanic cult, and cannibalism. Were you aware of those writings and what he...

Dr. FAWCETT: I was aware of some of them. I thought they were a little exaggerated.

CORDERI: You thought they were exaggerated, yet this is the man that you let start this unit?

Dr. FAWCETT: Just because he had certain ideas that I thought should be checked out, doesn't mean he shouldn't start a unit.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) But what if Pat **Burgus** had no idea that she was in fact a guinea pig for this new hypnosis and drug treatment?

(Photo of Pat; Xanax; bottles of drugs)

Man #1: (Videotaped deposition) Did you get written, informed consent from Mrs. **Burgus** before proceeding with hypnosis with her?

Dr. BRAUN: (Videotaped deposition) No.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) And Dr. Braun says he didn't need consent to prescribe the mild-altering drugs and the megadoses of the heart medication Inderal.

(Braun in videotaped deposition; pills and bottles of medication)

Dr. BRAUN: It is an approved process, and FDA allowed, to do off-label use of medication. Therefore, it was approved at Rush.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) The hospital says it was satisfied Dr. Braun at least discussed the treatment with Pat, and that informed consent was not needed to approve the large doses of mind-altering drugs.

(Rush Presbyterian Hospital; video footage of Braun; photo of Pat; bottles of drugs)

Dr. FAWCETT: What's the danger?

CORDERI: It's completely untested at such a high level.

Dr. FAWCETT: And what if it's well-supervised and well--and the patient's monitored very carefully?

CORDERI: Well, how supervised was it if you really didn't even know...

Dr. FAWCETT: There were no chart notes?

CORDERI: Copious chart notes seen by no one but Dr. Braun. You didn't look at them, did you?

Dr. FAWCETT: Did I look at them regularly? No.

CORDERI: At the notes?

Dr. FAWCETT: No.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) And what about one of the most incredible chapters of this saga--that Dr. Braun actually used the laboratory of a major urban hospital to test meat to see if it contained human flesh.

(Rush Presbyterian Hospital; spatula cutting through hamburger on grill)

Dr. BRAUN: (Videotaped deposition) Mrs. **Burgus** asked--told me that her father ground up human remains--as to hamburger--and and put them in meatloaf.

Man #1: (Videotaped deposition) And you found that to be a plausible statement?

Dr. BRAUN: (Videotaped deposition) One--one could certainly do that. It's possible to grind up meat and make meatloaf, whether it's lamb or--or turkey or cow or person.

Man #1: (Videotaped deposition) Has there ever been a documented report in human--in United States criminal history or mental health history, to your knowledge, that--that somebody ground up a relative into meatloaf?

Dr. BRAUN: (Videotaped deposition) No, not that I know of.

Dr. FAWCETT: We can't ignore what our patients tell us. I mean, I had a--I had John Wayne Gacy tell me about 33 bodies buried under his house and how he sexually tortured the children to death. That's pretty wild too, but the bodies were there in that case, right? We hear pretty lurid stuff and you don't just dismiss it because it's lurid.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Dr. Fawcett says he didn't know about the meat incident at the time, nor did he know that Dr. Braun had called in the FBI to investigate Pat's claims. In both cases, he says he became aware after the fact.

(Spatula cutting through cooking hamburger; FBI building; Fawcett in interview)

Dr. FAWCETT: I'm not saying that I--that I agreed with the--the degree to which Dr. Braun embraced these ideas. I think--as he heard them more and more, I think he embraced them more and more. I didn't agree with that, because I felt evidence should have been forthcoming, and I told him that.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Dr. Fawcett says he also was unaware that Dr. Braun had brought guns and handcuffs into therapy sessions with Pat and her children.

(Pistol; handcuffs; photo of Pat and sons)

Dr. FAWCETT: I wasn't aware of handcuffs with Pat. I'm sorry. I was not aware of that.

CORDERI: You know, doctor, on the face of this, it just seems that you weren't aware of a lot of things and the hospital wasn't aware of a lot of things.

Dr. FAWCETT: I--I was aware...

CORDERI: How could this have happened?

Dr. FAWCETT: I was aware--I was away of the general tenor of treatment. There's--there's

1500 admissions going on in this hospital every year; over 30, 40 doctors treating patients on a unit.

CORDERI: But if not you, who?

Dr. FAWCETT: I can't know every--every--every nuance of every treatment that's happening behind closed doors. I can't know that. And I knew that Dr. Braun was committed helping her.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Dr. Fawcett denies that insurance money and the profitability of the unit kept the hospital from taking action.

(Rush Presbyterian Hospital)

Dr. FAWCETT: We get the most severely ill patients with very complicated illnesses here. And the treatments required for some of these patients aren't always conventional treatments, and nonconventional treatments are areas of disagreement.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) In the end, the hospital's head of psychiatry, Dr. Braun's boss, says Dr. Braun did help Pat **Burgus** and the evidence is that she is now able to live with her family and function in society.

(Fawcett in interview with Corderi; Pat Burgess and family on beach)

Dr. FAWCETT: I--I would remind you that Mrs. **Burgus** has had a very good outcome to her treatment. I think she's got her life, the life of her children, maybe the life of her husband.

CORDERI: The way she got that life was getting of the drugs and looking for evidence and realizing that none of this had actually happened.

Dr. FAWCETT: At some point in treatment, everybody comes to question different symptoms they've had.

CORDERI: You say she got better, OK, and that she started disbelieving all these things.

Dr. FAWCETT: Mm-hmm.

CORDERI: But Dr. Braun went right on believing them. So what does that say? Who's sick here?

Dr. FAWCETT: Well, I don't think that's a sign of an illness. I--I don't think that--I think that Dr. Braun's beliefs are another matter.

CORDERI: And you don't think his beliefs are deleterious enough to warrant looking into whether he should be working at this hospital or working as a psychiatrist at all?

Dr. FAWCETT: Oh, I--I've--I've considered whether he should be working at this hospital. And I've decided he--that he was--he didn't do anything that wrong, and that he actually gave his patient good care; he was there for her. There's no damages.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Except that, last November, Rush Presbyterian Hospital, Dr. Braun, and a psychiatrist for the children, settled the **Burgus** lawsuit. They admitted no wrongdoing, but the hospital and the doctors' insurance companies paid Pat and her family a total of \$ 10.6 million to keep the case from going to court. Pat **Burgus** and her family had a victory, of sorts. But no amount of money could help them with what they had left to

endure.

(Rush Presbyterian Hospital; photo of Braun; hospital; newspaper headlines about settlement; Pat **Burgus**)

PAULEY: Waking up from a nightmare, when we return.

Announcer: DATELINE will continue after this message from your local station.

(Announcements)

PHILLIPS: Returning to our story--after years in the dark, Pat **Burgus** and her family have reached daylight again, but it's still a long way home. Here again, Victoria Corderi.

Unidentified Man #3: (Television interview) Where would Pat be without this unit?

Ms. **BURGUS**: (Television interview) I wouldn't be alive.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Today, when Pat **Burgus** watches the local TV news series that packaged her as a victim of multiple personality disorder, she sees herself in an entirely new light.

(Pat **Burgus** watching previous television footage)

CORDERI: You are very convincing in these various personalities. Somebody watching would say, 'Well, why would I believe her now? Who's the real Pat? The Pat in there? This Pat here?' What do you say to that?

Ms. **BURGUS**: I say what you're seeing there is someone who's very drugged, and hypnotized, and being controlled by someone who has to profit from it.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Pat **Burgus** is still trying to clear out the emotional wreckage from the years she and her two sons spent at Rush Presbyterian Hospital in the care of Dr. Bennett Braun. It took more than eight years for Pat to reconcile with her parents, whom she had accused of sexually abusing her and forcing her into the cult.

(Photo of Pat and sons; hospital; photo of Braun; Pat; photo of Pat with parents)

Ms. **BURGUS**: My parents aged so much through this. They went through so, so much.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) The first meetings were tentative. The little boys Pat's parents knew from before had turned into young men. Still, Pat's mother eventually found forgiveness, and was able to close what was one of the most painful chapters of her life.

(Photo of Pat with two young sons; photo of Pat's sons as young men)

CORDERI: What has this whole episode done to your relationship?

Woman #1: Now that it finally has been healed, well, if anything, it's made it more precious.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Pat says her relationship with her husband suffered as well. Mike did stick by family through their years in the hospital. But in the end, he never stepped in to rescue them.

(Pat with husband; photo of Pat, Mike and sons)

CORDERI: She was hypnotized and on drugs. But how could you let this happen? You weren't on drugs. You weren't hypnotized.

Mr. **BURGUS**: I wasn't on drugs, I wasn't hypnotized. The only people I had to rely on was the doctors and the staff at the hospital.

CORDERI: But what was coming out of the hospital was so seemingly unbelievable.

Mr. **BURGUS**: But Patty and the kids weren't the only people saying this. There were other patients that were saying the same things.

CORDERI: Do you bear any responsibility, do you think?

Mr. **BURGUS**: I--I don't know about responsibility, but I feel a lot of guilt.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) For three years, Pat and Mike's little boys had known no other home than the hospital.

(Photo of Pat and Mike's sons)

Ms. **BURGUS**: They had to learn to be outside; they had to learn to be in the world.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Today, more than a decade since they first came to Rush Presbyterian, they are teen-agers bearing deep emotional scars. They were behind in school, and required special tutors and a child psychiatrist to help them. They did not want to be interviewed, but at their mother's suggestion, returned to the hospital grounds.

(Pat's sons in silhouette; Pat talking to son)

Unidentified Man #4: (Voiceover) I can remember each and every hallway, what the rooms looked like.

(Hospital)

Ms. **BURGUS**: Well, that was your home for years, that's why.

Man #3: I used to have nightmares about being in that hospital. I used to wake up just terrified, not being able to control myself, trying to get out of wherever I was.

Ms. **BURGUS**: Remember when you used to run around the track, when we'd take you out?

Man #3: (Voiceover) Yeah. I remember that. I always wanted to run away off the track and, just, like, never come back.

(Photo of Pat's son running)

Ms. **BURGUS**: They were able to discard part of this as a kid discards a fantasy about the tooth fairy, but other parts were--were harder to let go of.

CORDERI: Are they still letting go?

Ms. **BURGUS**: I think they're to the point where they're--they're trying to--to be normal kids. I'm tremendously proud of them. They have been able to go through this and become

the people that they have become.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Now the family hopes it has a new lease on a more stable future. But still, Pat lives with the fact that Dr. Bennett Braun is still practicing psychiatry at Rush, although the hospital has closed down his clinic.

(Pat and Mike walking with sons; Braun walking into hospital)

CORDERI: If you wanted to hold Dr. Braun accountable for all of this, why did you choose to settle?

Ms. **BURGUS**: I fought fiercely in the settlement not to have a c--a gag order. I would not take this money in exchange for keeping quiet.

CORDERI: (Voiceover) Now it is Pat who is spreading the word to anyone who will listen--not about the satanic cult she once believed in, but about the cult-like existence Dr. Braun created within the walls of this hospital. She does it, she says, to ensure that it never happens again.

(Corderi walking with Pat; Rush Presbyterian Hospital; Corderi with Pat)

CORDERI: Why do you think you survived?

Ms. **BURGUS**: I think sometimes all you have is love and faith and hope.

(Voiceover) And our love was never in question; our faith wasn't in question; and we just had to hope that God would get us through this.

(Photo of **Burgus** family)

PHILLIPS: Based on Dr. Braun's treatment of Pat **Burgus** and her children, the state of Illinois has brought formal charges against him in an effort to revoke his medical license. Dr. Braun has moved to dismiss the complaint. And ironically, questions are now being raised about the case that first brought multiple personality disorder to the public's attention--Sybil. As we mentioned earlier, she became the subject of a best-selling book and a popular TV movie. Well, recently, one of her psychiatrists and a psychologist who has closely studied her case, suggested that Sybil herself may have been the victim of suggestion. In other words, her many personalities may have also been manufactured by a doctor.

PAULEY: And now here's Katie Couric with a look at what's coming up tomorrow on "Today." Katie:

KATIE COURIC reporting: Thanks, Jane.

(Voiceover) On the eve of John Glenn's historical return to space 36 years after he was the first American to orbit the Earth, we'll have a rare interview with his wife Annie about the mission--her hopes and fears as her husband does what no man his age has done before.

(John Glenn in spacesuit; footage of Glenn's mission years ago; John Glenn putting on helmet; Annie Glenn; John Glenn)

COURIC: That's tomorrow on "Today." Stone:

PHILLIPS: Thanks, Katie. Now let's take a look at one of the stories we're working on for

DATELINE Wednesday.

(Voiceover) She was a champion--always in the winner's circle--until a day at the races turned tragic.

(Dateline Wednesday graphic; horse race; photo of woman standing beside)

Unidentified Race Commentator: (Horse race) We've got a rider down. There's a rider down at the gap.

PHILLIPS: (Voiceover) In a split second, an accident changed the course of her life forever.

(Accident during horse race; X-ray showing pins in bones)

Unidentified Woman #2: I couldn't close my hand and it just scared me. I thought, 'Oh my god, I am going to be paralyzed.'

PHILLIPS: (Voiceover) Would she ever recover? A DATELINE Survivor Story, on DATELINE Wednesday.

(Woman working out; Dateline Wednesday graphic)

PAULEY: And that's DATELINE for this Tuesday. We'll see you again for DATELINE Wednesday at 8, 7 Central. Now stay tuned for your local news. I'm Jane Pauley. For all of us at NBC News, good night.

LOAD-DATE: October 28, 1998